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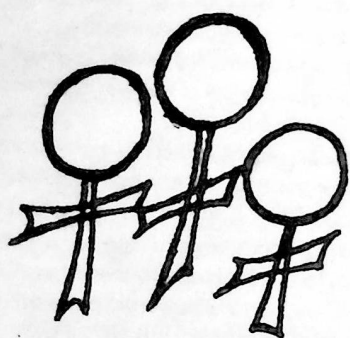
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COMPLIMENTARY

# Valley Women's Voice

MARCH

VOLUME IV Issue 2



## Cross Ocean To Turn Tide

by Kippy Phelps

After two weeks of lobbying in Washington, D.C. on the issue of nuclear deployment in Europe, the European Women's Disarmament Delegation spoke at Hampshire College on Feb. 2nd. The women spoke with several congresspeople on Capitol Hill, at the Riverside Church in N.Y.C., and appeared on T.V. talk shows as well as news programs. Danielle Grumberg, who is with the Women's Peace Alliance in Britain and who connects the different women's peace and disarmament groups in Europe, brought the European Women's Disarmament Delegation together. These women, who are leading activists in Belgium, England, Holland, Italy, and West Germany, met for the first time when they arrived in the states to form this delegation.

Why did they come to America? In introducing the delegation, Danielle said, "I came here to communicate to the Americans some of the anxiety and distress felt by the people of Europe, how we feel about your government's actions in our countries. When we reject your government's kind gift of protection from the Soviet Union, you will understand we're not being anti-American, as your papers label us, as if it was some sort of awful sin. We're not anti-American any more than we are anti-communist; but we are anti-hundreds of deadly American missiles in our countries."

Exemplifying the contagious, determined, and justified positivism of the speakers, Francesca Piatti of the International Peace Camp at Comiso, Italy, said, "We are here to do our best to communicate to the State Department that our movement is still very much alive, very much kicking." Her movement has been told by the State Department that they are as good as a 'dead duck', that the movement will die just as soon as the missiles are deployed. But Francesca said, "The hopes of the movement will turn to anger, to non-violent anger." Danielle explained that "out of this anger about U.S. nuclear deployment has grown a new alliance, a real alliance of the European people, unlike the NATO alliance, which seems to exist only for American interests. Despite what your people say here, the Peace Movement is not dead: it's growing bigger all the time. The missiles which are due to be taken out of Greenham Common and hidden behind the bushes so the Russians can't see them are not able to move out of the base. Why? Because the Peace Movement has got itself so well organized that they are incapable of doing it."

The delegation showed the sense of U.S. missiles and U.S. presence that is so pervasive in Europe. From this has grown not only young left wing people's involvement in the Peace Movement, but very traditional people's involvement as well.



VROUWEN VOOR VREDE  
Women for Peace (Dutch)

In Britain, a country about the size of Pennsylvania, there are about 150 U.S. nuclear military facilities. At Greenham Common, where the first missiles were deployed, there are now two U.S. military personnel for every one British soldier. Hospitals are being built for the sole use of American soldiers. Seventy per cent of the English people distrust the reasons on which Americans and NATO might base their decision to fire the missiles.

In Comiso, Italy, a small town of about 26,000 inhabitants on the island of Sicily, there will be 6,000 NATO personnel moving in with their families and aides, their roads, their base and their homes. The Comisoans have been told the NATO presence will be inconspicuous because the NATO personnel "are very discrete; it's not very likely that they will show up in public at all."

The members of the delegation showed the connections between the economic, military and political systems in their countries, and how these have become more and more dependant on each other. They described the peace movements as breaking through existing power structures on both a small and a large scale. Tres Lambrechts, a grass-roots organizer in Holland, described the impetus behind this breakthrough for her group, Women for Peace, as growing from a deep concern that "life and death can no longer be left in the hands of 'experts'." The Peace Movement in Holland concentrates on making individual contact, "which is important because this way you can change your ideas and then grow from the other person's ideas." Tres's group strives to meet with people who disagree with them. She described the importance of spending a whole evening talking to someone, for "otherwise, you appear as threatening."



H.T. xke.

Italian public opinion polls show a 60 to 90 per cent opposition to deployment of the missiles, with 10 per cent more women than men against. Because of this, Comiso grass-roots workers, who go door to door to talk with people, are particularly encouraging women to become politically active.

Frouwka Laning, a Dutch Christian Democrat and member of Parliament, sees pacifism, 'ecologism' and feminism as a triangle which can break the existing power structures. She thinks popular pressure is the only real tool of non-violence. "It is the only way we have to make sure that our politicians, after being voted into office, stick by what they promised earlier."

When meeting with Richard Bert, Assistant Secretary of State, the women talked about the massive popular opposition to the missiles in all their countries. He didn't like hearing this, and as Danielle said, "He got very angry and very aggressive, and told us, 'We do not conduct foreign policy on opinion polls'." They also told him they didn't like the kind of negotiations that involved only the two superpowers arguing over the fate of Europe. "We are also interested in the result," said the women. "O.k., yes, alright," Bert said, "but it might get a little complicated with so many people around the table. So you have to take turns."

Danielle told "one little quite funny thing" about Bert. As the women sat around a table with Bert, his assistant, and the director of the Quaker Meeting House, where they stayed while in Washington, the Quaker asked if they could hold hands and reflect a minute in silence. Bert, with a drawn face, looked at his assistant sitting next to him and said, "Well, come on then, Charlie." As he sat linking hands with

women from different countries around that table, Bert symbolically took part in linking hands around the world.

One of the highlights of their trip was described to me by several members of the delegation. While in Washington, they read about Reagan's campaign to put prayer time back in the schools, about his stance against abortion, and they concluded that he prays for the unborn. The women made a large banner which read, "You better spend your billions of military dollars on the hungry before you start praying for the unborn." Through tears of laughter they told of how they managed to hold their banner up right in front of the White House for an hour and a half. A policeman had questioned them about a permit almost as soon as they were in position with their banner. Without answering yes or no they responded, "We spoke to Bert yesterday, and we spoke to Nitze, and it's really interesting because we're a delegation from Europe..." The policeman seemed impressed, said, "Oh, alright," and walked away. Tourists were quite surprised as they came from the White House; about half were supportive of the banner's message.

Toward the end of the forum, a young woman in the audience said, "I am one of those people who would like to see Reagan out of office in November, but I feel very pessimistic about it at the moment. He's been on the cover of *Newsweek* and *Time*, and he's got the media's edge on the other candidates while there's a very conservative mood throughout the country. I'd like to do something, but I don't know quite what to do." To this Danielle responded, "It worries me that somebody as young as yourself feels the way you feel... I don't know what groups you have available to join, but there must be many, as I hear this is a very active area. So out of those vast optional groups, just go out and join one." This reminded me of a quote she had read earlier by Dwight Eisenhower, "Some day people are going to want peace so badly that they're just going to go out and get it."

\*\*\*\*\*  
"WITHOUT WOMEN WE MEN  
WOULD STILL BE WALKING  
AROUND IN ANIMAL SKINS."  
\*\*\*\*\*  
Reagan's reply  
to women who asked about  
women's rights.  
\*\*\*\*\*





WOMEN OF COLOR/THIRD  
WORLD WOMEN

THEME COORDINATOR: Joan

EDITORIAL: Lynn, Joan, Eithne (Student Intern)

NEWSBRIEFS: Phyllis Rodin

PRODUCTION: Gina, Lynn, Kippy, Buck, Phyllis, Joan, Nina, Eithne, Rima (Student Intern), Cheryl, Aquilla, Zephyr, Linda, Rosemary.

GRAPHICS: Aquilla, Linda Shepley, Dori Hippof.

ADVERTISING: Buck, Gina.  
DISTRIBUTION: Joan, Meg, Kippy, Phyllis, Janice, Judy, Diane.

LOOKING AHEAD  
APRIL: Sex/Sexuality

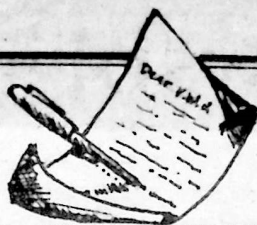
MAY: Women on the Land

JUNE: Women and Politics

SUMMER: Women's Passages/  
Women Growing

TO MAKE THESE ISSUES  
BETTER, Contribute!

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# Letters

Dear Sisters,

Every month the *Valley Women's Voice* gets letters from you telling us what a great job we're doing. Every month several kind women wander in during production and, somehow or other, we manage to put out the next issue of the paper. Production is always hectic; we always need more help than we get.

Now we need another kind of help, too. Until two years ago, we were funded by the Undergraduate Student Senate. With that money we were able to pay some of our staff for the time they put in. This created stability for the paper. That funding is no longer ours, and any stability we have now depends upon women who take it upon themselves to oversee the work of the paper. The time a volunteer can put into the paper has to be fitted around the time that our jobs, schoolwork, and children demand. Because of that, the overseeing and co-ordination performed by a few core women, and their willingness to pick up on tasks that no one else could find time to do, is vital. It has been increasingly difficult for us to fill these critical roles without offering a stipend. Unless we can find money to pay those stipends, the VWV will cease to exist after June.

Ten thousand copies of the VWV are produced each month. Two thousand of the 10,000 people who pick up this paper free must subscribe if we are to continue. We must have that number of subscribers by mid April. If we do not get them, we, like the *Campus Connection* and the *Amherst Record* before us, will have to fold. This does not NEED to happen. You decide.

In May we will announce whether the goal is reached and whether June will see the last issue. It is rather like voting; you can leave the decisions to others or raise your own voice.

Ta ta!

Your loving VWV Staff

Dear Valley Women's Voice,

I want to commend you for your efforts in keeping the VWV alive. You deserve a lot of credit for finding the strength to increase membership while faced with the loss of your headquarters. Considering the obstacles present, it could have been tempting for you to quit.

Thanks for finding the strength to continue. The *Valley Women's Voice* has been and continues to be a valuable resource in the community.

Realizing the possible loss of the VWV has compelled me to offer my support in the form of a subscription to the paper. I'm glad I did so before it was too late.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Thompson

Dear Sisters,

My real-estate agent Muriel Whitlock at D.H.Jones sent me your 5th anniversary issue. Thank you for existing! You do my feminist heart good!

Please remember me when I contact you in July. My family and I are moving to the Amherst area into an unknown rental house. We plan to build a post and beam house on our 14 acres in Leverett. For us, this area and all our plans are the dream of a lifetime. You all are adding to our glory.

Waiting to arrive,  
Rhoda Juels

Dear Valley Women,

I had a great time working on the production of the February issue of the *Valley Women's Voice*. The work was stimulating and creative, calling forth artistic as well as verbal skills and energy. I met some absolutely marvelous women and learned a great deal while sharing the excitement and joy of being part of a cooperative group that worked very well. Magic was in the air mingling with our laughter and love. Thank you to all the production staff for one of the highest experiences of my life. And to all other Valley women, come join us—you'll like us.

For fun and women's magic,  
Lynn Russell

Dear Friends:

A special note of appreciation to those who responded so immediately to our October request for contributions. It was wonderful to receive again your notes and letters encouraging our efforts and telling us of your own struggles and progressions. Some of you even apologized for your \$5 or \$10 gifts, while comparing your present economy with our own needs.

*Please understand that we are grateful for whatever you can give, that we regard every gift as a generous act.*

To those of you who have not given, please know that we are not yet close to our goal. We hope your silence has been only an oversight, for we believe that our contributions to the education of, for, by, and about women to be substantial. And though there may be many needy causes tugging at your funds, we hope that the work of *THE FEMINIST PRESS* important enough to you to warrant your response—whatever the amount.

Cordially,

Florence Howe  
Maxine McCants

Dear VWV Readers:

I am interested in interviewing lesbians who have become parents after coming out. I am a lesbian social worker, working on a thesis for a master's degree, and am a member of a support group; Lesbians Interested in Becoming Parents. There is pitifully little research on lesbian families, most of it focusing on the children of lesbians (i.e. demonstrating they are no different from children raised in heterosexual families. Of course!) While this is a very important contribution, I am interested in the experiences of the parents themselves.

Participation would involve a single, one or two hour interview. I am interested in interviewing couples, single parents, and those in co-parenting situations. As I live in Boston, I am confining my travels to New England and the New York area and wish to complete my interviewing by April.

If you are interested, please write me: Janet Gottler, 74 Carolina Avenue, Jamaica Plain, MA, 02130. *Absolute confidentiality will be maintained.*

Sincerely,

Janet Gottler





# Newsbriefs

## WELCOME BACK

Back in 1978, ANNA GYORGY and her friends collated the book NO NUKES: EVERYONE'S GUIDE TO NUCLEAR POWER. She had no idea then it would prove so effective and so prophetic. Originally from Montague Anna used to live in the alternative community behind which Sam Lovejoy pulled down the tower that threatened to introduce a giant nuclear energy reactor project into the quiet of the countryside. The book was so well received that Anna was invited to cities and towns all over the United States, Canada and Europe at the time when Americans were just becoming aware of the threat nuclear energy plants and missiles posed to the general safety.

"We wrote this book," she said, "because we didn't want to become 'nuclear neighbors'. It was the threat of a giant nuclear reactor complex in our town which made us aware of the problems with atomic power plants in general... As the stockpiles of atomic wastes mushroomed, as the price of both plant construction and electric bills soared, as the health and environmental dangers became more obvious—so did the anti-nuclear movement grow."

Anna is returning, after a year in Washington DC where she has been helping to set up the national NUCLEAR FREEZE campaign. She will be co-ordinating the Jesse Jackson campaign in Springfield, Mass.

## BERKSHIRE WOMEN'S NEWS

The BERKSHIRE WOMEN'S NEWS has been publicly accused of printing 'propaganda' and 'pornography'. Two letters to their distributor, the Berkshire Media Group, labelled a front page article by Dorchen Leidholt which points out the dangers of legalized images of violence against women, as 'obscene' and appealing to the 'readers' prurient interests'. This decided publisher, Alan Copland, to no longer distribute the Women's News as inserts in his three weekly journals.

The article in question appeared in the January/February, 1984 issue describing the connection between the New Bedford gang rape and an article in THE HUSTLER.

In a letter to Mr. Copland, THE BERKSHIRE WOMEN'S NEWS' Board of Directors expounds at length on their belief that the pornographic degradation of women is inextricably connected with violence against women in the Berkshires and everywhere. "Behaving like ostriches will not make the unpleasantness go away... Images of exploitation and violence to women (and children) are rampant in our country... Images of exploitation and violence have become so normal a part of life today as to seem acceptable... The courts have ruled that pornography is illegal only if it is 'obscene'... if it goes beyond substantially beyond contemporary community standards and if it is utterly without redeeming social or scientific value. "By this threepronged standard, much that is sexually violent against women actually has been judged in a court of law to be valuable—in fact, educational."... This is not 1873 when the Comstock Act was passed to suppress public information about 'vice'. This is 1984 and women's voices are being heard.

For further information, contact: GLEN OGDEN, President Board of Directors BERKSHIRE WOMEN'S NEWS P.O.B.1907 Pittsfield, MA 012021907 Tel: (413) 229-2138/2149

## COCK-A-DOODLE

According to Dr. Lillian Haddock, endocrinologist at the University of Puerto Rico, two to three thousand young girls between 6 months and 8 years of age have been afflicted with 'thelarche' an unusual glandular disorder which has spread throughout the island. The cause is attributed to the illegal use of estrogen by chicken farmers who feed the hormone to their poultry to fatten them.

"The truth is that, at this point, we don't really know why a 6-month-old female infant suddenly starts to develop breasts," says Dr. Jose Cordero, medical epidemiologist at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, GA whose aid was sought to explain the phenomena.

Dr. James L. Mills of the National Institutes of Health studied a similar outbreak of premature 'thelarche' which broke out in the U.S. in August, 1981. "However, many of our subjects developed breast enlargement before the patient was introduced to meat." (This suggests it transmits from mother to fetus.)

Dr. Carmen Saenz de Rodrigues from San Juan reports that a large percentage of her young patients have developed ovarian cysts. Others show symptoms of precocious puberty. Females as young as 4 or 5 grow pubic hair, begin to menstruate and commence bone development that precludes normal growth. Dr. Saenz who is outspoken about her suspicions concerning the possible linkage of estrogen to 'thelarche', was almost killed last October (ala Silkwood?) when her car caught fire a few minutes after she parked it. Authorities suspect a car bomb.

In 1977, an epidemic broke out in an Italian school on the outskirts of Milan in which breast enlargement in young boys (called gynecomastia) was found to be more prevalent than 'thelarche' in girls. An uncontrolled supply of poultry or, more likely, veal is suspected to have been responsible. (PARADE 2/10/84)

## EYE OPENER

Gerda Miller, a Gray Panther from Berkeley, California, underwent a three hour eye operation in 1981 that cost \$1,100. One year later, the same operation on her other eye cost \$2,000. When Miller questioned the hospital as to why the second operation cost almost double, she was told "not to worry... that Medicare would take care of it."

She did not agree with this type of pork-barrelling and expressed her outrage about the excessive costs to her ophthalmologist. He met with his area colleagues who decided that unless the hospital set a reasonable standard rate for this type of operation, they would refer their patients elsewhere. The hospital agreed to cut costs in the future.

A survey conducted by Equifax Services, Inc., Atlanta, GA, found that a high percentage contained errors which if not detected would result in inflated claim payments, "of 331 bills audited for 87 major insurers, 77 percent contained charges that could not be substantiated as services actually rendered." NETWORK Winter '84

## Behind the Cheese Shop

Eva Brodine is suing the US Marine Corp for \$7 million with the intent of restoring her honor even though her dream of a military career is all but dead. Robust, athletic, in love with the competitive spirit, she had signed up for a life in the Marine Corps. When officials said a urine test indicated she was pregnant, she was kicked out of the Marine Corps. Needless to say, the child never materialized.

Such a mistake is understandable inasmuch as the military has permitted itself so little experience with women. Despite active recruiting, the Pentagon has only raised the quota for women in the total force from 1.4% in 1970 to 9.3% in 1983. (Boston Herald 8/3/83, USA TODAY 2/21/84)

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# M.U.S.C.L.E.:

## Coming On Strong

by Cindy Foster

For as long as there has been divorce, there has been a problem collecting child support payments. This age old problem may never have a perfect working solution, but at least the system could be improved.

In Massachusetts in 1983, over 60 percent of all court orders for support were outstanding. That amounts to \$4,054,565 out of \$6,375,768 (yes, those are millions) not being paid *every month!*

Where does the problem lie? Can the fault be channeled into one single area? No. The system is too big and too complicated to blame any one agency. So will there ever be a reasonable solution to the problem? That is where M.U.S.C.L.E. comes in.

Mothers Uniting to receive Support for their Children through Legislative Efforts (M.U.S.C.L.E.), a non-profit organization in Hampshire Co., is building membership and gaining strength rapidly. It does not protest or picket, but rather, sets up teams of women who can be ready to move at a moment's notice. They call and write to local representatives demanding positive action on any bill needing passage to further child support enforcement. They will testify before Congress to give reasons why these bills should become law. Their votes will be used to oust any member of the Legislature who votes against support enforcement.

Only recently has any real attempt been made by our law makers to improve collection of support payments. Massachusetts Greater Boston Legal Services has written a proposal to enable mothers to become self-sufficient and permanently off welfare roles. They would like to see support hearings taken out of civil court and put into criminal court.

Other proposals made were: attachment of wages of the absent father, working through the I.R.S. to apply any state tax return to arrearages, attachment of real and personal property of the father, and placing fathers in a work release program from the county jail.

The latter course would enable non-paying fathers to continue working but would punish them for neglecting their children.

M.U.S.C.L.E. agrees with attaching wages and thinks more judges should exercise this option. They would like to see this a federal law upheld by state governments. That way any father leaving the state could still be made to pay. Simply tapping into the Social Security number bank would find any working father and his employer.

Working with the I.R.S. would work only for the welfare office that puts substantial amounts into a family and receives nothing from the father. For the working mother who doesn't depend on welfare aid, it will be a long, drawn out task that may not even benefit her in the end. Furthermore, a father has the right to appeal a decision to attach his state tax return.

Attaching personal or real property wouldn't benefit the mother until the father sold the property; that property also must be in the mother's state of residency.

Putting the father in jail on a work release program would be all right as far as the father's not losing his job goes. He'd be paying taxes, so virtually he'd be paying for his room and board, while his pay check could go for support payments. But jails are already crowded as it is. If they are now letting two-bit crooks and muggers off on probation because of over-crowding, a neglectful father certainly won't be locked up.

Look. The Legislature is made up of men. The justices on the bench are men. Law enforcement agencies are predominately male. Even lawyers who dominate the profession are men. Is there any wonder that fathers walk away from the whole thing? Could the problem lie with sexism?

M.U.S.C.L.E. wants to see an improvement in the Department of Public Welfare's policies on collection from absent fathers. DPW's involvement seems to be very sporadic and ineffectual. Yes, they manage to collect from some fathers, and that gives them a good name; but you never hear about

the cases that are never followed up or never even looked into. But then, what can the DPW really do? They can get a father into court, get a court order, and send out delinquency notices if the father still refuses to pay. They can go back for a contempt of court order and an order requiring the father to answer to the judge as to why he is not paying. But still, the DPW can not force the father to pay if he does not want to.

Right now, the research team of M.U.S.C.L.E. is investigating the policies of other states that have toughened support enforcement laws that seem to be working. If four states can get results from get-tough laws, 46 other states can

too, they believe. M.U.S.C.L.E. would like to see Federal cooperation in this fight for stronger support laws.

As it stands right now, the laws and theories our law makers have come up with all look good on paper. But like an airplane made of the finest materials with the finest engineering still needs the skill of pilot and flight crew to get anywhere, so, too, with legislation. With the watchful eye of M.U.S.C.L.E. upon them, let us hope that the people behind these laws can make them fly.

For further information, if you would like to help, or if you need M.U.S.C.L.E.'s help, contact Cindy Foster, Williamsburg, or Dorrie Bluemer, Northampton. □

## When More Is Better

by Tetty Gorfine

We are all vulnerable to it. *More is better.* I first experienced it as a child. If one aspirin wasn't enough, two would surely do the trick. In school, the harder and longer I attended to my studies, the better student I would be. And, perhaps the best example, the more I minded Mom, the better behaved I was, the better girl I would be.

Things never really changed much. Prettier was better. Smarter was better, competition was best. I built my world around the notion that more was better. As far as I could tell, others around me were doing the same.

Well, I never really measured up to the "most" anything. Life was always a little farther away than I could reach. I became depressed, and the harder I tried, the more effort I put out, the more miserable I became.

Deciding to do something about it was a relief. So I shifted my energies into bettering myself. I changed my diet, I began exercising, I went into therapy. Slowly I learned that the more I stayed away from sugar, white flour, starches, carbohydrates, fats, chemicals, and meats, the healthier I would be. I learned that the longer and harder I


exercised, the better shape I would be in...And finally in therapy I learned that my pain and suffering would lead me to health. The more I suffered, the faster I would be cured.

The only trouble with this marvelous "more is better" philosophy was that I was always hungry and dissatisfied with my diet, exhausted from exercise, and always in pain. In fact, the more I adhered to my strategy, the more miserable I became.

To tell the truth, it took a long time to turn all this around. Very slowly I began regulating my diet to my own particular body and needs. The more I did this, the better I felt. Then I found that the more I stayed tuned to my own body during exercise, pushing myself just a little, but taking care not to overdo, the stronger I felt. Perhaps most of all I learned that my pain and suffering, although a part of my life at times, would not cure neuroses and make me better adjusted. The more I learned to trust myself and love myself, the better I felt about me.

Perhaps the thing, then, that none of us can really get enough of is strength and courage in the belief that all answers lie within us, if we dare to trust that we are the best there is. □


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# Friedan's Priorities—Third Stage

by Phyllis Rodin

It was 1966 when Betty Friedan, author of *THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE* (1963) walked out of still another meeting of the President's Commission on the Status of Women. The reason she gave was that she was tired of the rhetoric. She invited any of the women present who wanted to *do* something about changing the status of women, instead of talking about it, to join her in her hotel room. Seventeen women did and the NATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR WOMEN was born. NOW, as it became known, spearheaded women's struggles for Equal Rights, for the right to their own bodies, for educational opportunities for women, child care, civil rights, displaced homemaker funding, Third World Women economic and educational reforms, 9-to-5 consciousness raising, Take Back the Night protests, criminal justice for women, divorce rights, child abuse counseling and shelters, battered women legislation shelters, and funding, anti-nuke and peace advocacy, political action. The consciousness-raising workshops and women's support systems that are all taken for granted in 1984 helped open the minds of the women. Dr. Friedan interviewed from amongst her upper and upper-middle class Smith College classmates led to the book that introduced Feminism and changed the course of the future of the planet. These women, like herself, were constrained, by demands of domesticity on time and energy, to the confines of the traditional four walls. Domesticity prevented them from exploring and expanding their horizons.

Dr. Friedan's February 8th visit, sponsored by the UMass Distinguished Visitor Program, served as a forceful reminder that if the cause is just and conviction strong enough, tireless effort can change social institutions, academic attitudes, political paralysis with which time and custom have entrapped hope and progress. Dynamic, convincing, dedicated, Professor Friedan minced no words, warning about the present dangers to the future of Americans and the world under Reagan.

"Not only are the gains that have been made by NOW and the Feminist Movement in the past 18 years in danger of being wiped out if Reagan is re-elected, but also, life itself on this planet. Civil rights, social services, welfare, aid for single mothers, food stamps, medicaid, senior citizen assistance...all face the threat of legal annihilation should Reagan be re-instated. Inasmuch as one of his first acts in the new term would be to pack the Supreme Court with judges who would be administering their kind of justice long after Mr. Reagan's demise," she said.

"Priorities begin with women's rights," Friedan said. "The gender gap does make a difference. The feminization of poverty is a reality. It is a deliberate sexist drive on the part of the present administration to wipe out all the social gains that have been made since the beginning of the century. It cuts across all lines to affect women who work but who were not necessarily born into the working class. Mostly it affects single parents. It should be kept in mind that all revolutions come from depressing the educated middle class...."

"Today's issues are survival, economic stability, life support systems. Continuation of the present regime

would definitely impede progress on solution to the problems that need to be resolved. The promise of America since WWII has been the guarantee of opportunity for women, blacks and minorities to explore their potential. To achieve this transformation in 1984 the 6 million women who will vote...the 6 million more than men, that is...will make the difference. The assurance of a woman as a vice-presidential running mate would determine which candidate women would support. "In fact," Friedan said, "I'm terrified the Republicans will take advantage of this and come up with a woman who will not be a feminist...someone like Phyllis Schlafly. There are many highly qualified women who would enhance the Democratic ballot like Geraldine Farrar, Ellie Schmeel, Pat Schroeder, Barbara McKosky, Carol Bellamy, Diane Feinstein, to mention a few. I wish one would put her name forward. Yes, a woman for vice-president is tokenism. But the only way the Democrats can win is with a woman as running mate."

\*\*\*

Dr. Friedan went on to say that NOW's early endorsement of Mondale was the result of 12 years of working with him on legislative issues and not once having been let down. The threat of nuclear destruction, the arms race, the cost of the military complex, the spectre of war and famine could only be eliminated by active participation of the voting youth in the electoral process. She herself was returning that very night to N.Y. to run as a delegate for Mondale. "This is not a gender problem," she said. "This is a race survival problem. Men, as well as women, have got to get together to defeat Reagan if we are to keep our minimum achievements, rights and privileges for economic freedom...for social justice."

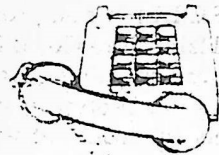
"And that seems a good note to end on," said Dr. Friedan. She was then given a standing ovation by the more than 750 students present in the Student Ballroom at the UMass Campus Center.

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The Distinguished Visitors Program is to be commended for bringing this noted feminist and author to UMass at this time.

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## Presidential Candidate : Feminist

by Liz Seaborn

On October 24, 1984, Sonia Johnson announced her candidacy for the presidential nomination of the Citizen's Party. She accepted the challenge to run because she believes that in doing so we can together introduce into the heart of this presidential debate a feminist analysis that is so crucial to the continuation of life on our planet.

Sonia is running to win. Because in this campaign winning does not only mean occupancy of the Oval Office. Winning means introducing into the presidential debate crucial ideas and images of women which otherwise would almost certainly not emerge. Winning means making the connection between violence against women and against the planet and human species. Winning means empowering women and other oppressed people to act on their convictions and beliefs. Winning means breaking down stereotypes of women that keep us subordinate. Winning means making the connection between violence against women and racism, classism, ageism, ableism and the hatred against lesbians and gay men.

Winning means introducing into the presidential debate the idea that all violence has its roots in violence against women and that global revolution in the status of women is essential for planetary survival. The idea that our strongest defense is not military but, instead the feminist mind

(as opposed to the old rapist, military mind). The idea that either all war is finished or we are...that unilateral disarmament and an immediate 50% reduction in the military budget is imperative. The idea that we must respect the absolute sovereignty of other nations, and bring home any and all US military forces on foreign soil; the idea that citizens have certain inalienable rights, including the right to a decent job with equal pay.

\*\*\*

Winning means countering our despair and believing in our strength to live the world we envision.

\*\*\*

Sonia recently returned from two intense weeks of meeting and planning with women's peace groups in Western Europe and the Soviet Union.

On March 8 - International Women's Day - women from Greenham Common, England; West Germany's Green Party; Women for Peace in the Netherlands and Germany; women from La Ragnatela at Comiso, Sicily, as well as women from France, Switzerland, Chile, the United States, the Soviet Union and perhaps as many as a dozen other countries will gather in Geneva for the first meeting of the Women's International Disarmament Alliance. March 8th will mark the beginning of an intense four-day period of sharing information and ideas, defining our intentions for the future and agreeing on positive unified action.

Sonia Johnson is 47 years old and has taught English and Education both in this country and in Africa, for fifteen years prior to her excommunication from the Mormon Church for her outspoken support of the ERA in 1979. She tells her story in *From Housewife to Heretic*, published in 1981. She lives in Arlington, Va. with two of her four children. She has been an activist for many years, and was among those who chained themselves to the White House fence in August of 1981 in a demonstration of women's chained status and was one of the 54 women who were arrested illegally while marching from Seneca Falls to the Seneca Women's Peace Encampment in August of 1983.

(for more information regarding Sonia's campaign, contact LIZ SEABORN at (413) 628-3908)

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# Japanese Women: An Inside View

by Rimako Kimura

It has astonished a lot of Western people that Japanese society has kept women in low status in spite of its successful industrialization and seeming westernization.

An American journalist from the *Los Angeles Times* coming to Japan a few years ago was struck by the way women were treated there. "It seemed to me that discrimination against women was everywhere," he said. "At the same time, everything seemed to work out. I wondered why."

A search for answers to his question brought him to Japan again, this time to interview different Japanese people. I met him as one of eight college students invited to his office in Tokyo last March.

"I'd like to hear what the Japanese younger generation thinks of the role of men and women," he told us. "My first impression," he continued, "was that Japanese women were treated badly. But as I have come to know your culture and society better, I have realized that I should not make judgements based on American standards, such as the number of women executives and the amount of money women make. I come to the conclusion that their status in Japan should be discussed in the context of Japanese culture as a whole. How can we westerners dare to say that Japanese women have much less power than American women?"

I think he made a good point, since the power women hold in society differs from culture to culture. Furthermore, the power itself is hard to define and measure. An American woman who earns \$20,000 annual income is able to enjoy more material freedom than a Japanese woman who earns two million Yen (\$8,000) a year. And an American woman protected by legislation such as Affirmative Action is able to get a job more easily than a Japanese woman. It is obvious that American women have a better opportunity to pursue a career than Japanese women because of greater educational opportunity, fewer social restraints, and greater flexibility of working hours and child care arrangements. This is the great advantage that American women have. But I would like to say that the economic and legal indices do not tell the whole story of women in their public and private worlds.

For instance, Americans observe that the Japanese housewife within her home has more authority and respect than her American counterpart. In the majority of Japanese families, the husband turns over his entire salary to his wife, who then doles out to him a daily allowance for cigarettes, drinks and sundries. And it is the wife who decides such matters as where the family will live, what car it will buy, and what schools the children will attend. The Japanese think of the job of "housewife" as a profession. A woman can find a stable and comfortable place to belong in the "inside sphere" of home and family where she enjoys considerable autonomy.

Japan as a nation has its own history. We have the mythology in which a goddess played an active role in founding our nation. At one point, we had a woman emperor. More than a thousand years ago, it was women who were the leading creators of literature. We can find a number of women storytellers and poets who are today still highly admired. It was women who created one of three kinds of letters used to write Japanese. There were women warriors around the Twelfth Century.

We have the memory of brave, talented generous, spiritual, aggressive, romantic and patient women through our history.

In this era of high technology, there is a village in Okinawa, a southern Japanese island, where the dreams of old women make the final decisions of local issues. This is a variation of matriarchy in which certain women are given the power to make political decisions, although they are reserved and humble old women, never exposed to the idea of Western feminism.

There are other regions in the countryside where a housewife is expected to be a good worker who helps her husband with his job. Quite often women show tremendous ability in running a small business and have the physical and mental strength required in fishing or managing a farm. Although they are not sophisticated, career-oriented women, they know how to do things well, making themselves indispensable in the local community.

Let me go back to the journalist's question; why everything works out despite the obvious discrimination against women.

Yes. Our society has carried sexist attitudes since the highly centralized feudal system was established based on Confucianism at the beginning of the 17th century. Today many companies still prefer to hire women from two-year junior colleges, not four-year universities, presumably because graduates of junior colleges are more compliant and less ambitious. Such female employees are expected to serve tea, make copies, in other words, to create a comfortable working atmosphere for male co-workers, who see them as potential wives. They are expected to leave jobs after marriage or pregnancy and before they are 26 or 27 years old. They are thus excluded from the Japanese seniority system, being given no chance for promotion.

Why are Japanese women quiet about such discrimination?

I would say because they are not used to causing conflict by insisting on their own rights. Our tradition has cherished "the harmony," which makes people choose resignation and patience instead of taking the risk of challenging the established order. Also, the society (company, family, etc.) take care of one, to a certain extent, so long as one conforms to the norms of Japanese culture. This conforming provides a sense of the security of being protected by some group.

For a homogeneous people living on a populated island, it is natural to learn how to work with people around by constantly paying attention to what they would do and what they would think, so as not to disturb them. A Japanese female writer says that we have the freedom to be the same but no freedom to be different. Another female journalist says, "If you want to change the structures, you have to try to do everything without big friction and to change the consensus in quiet, even tricky ways."

This could be the answer to the American journalist's wonderings.

In fact, Japanese women have modified their attitude toward their gender

role and influenced the national consensus in just that quiet and tricky way. In the early 1970's, polls showed that 80% of Japanese women believed that a husband should work and a wife should take care of the home. By 1979, however, only 36% of them still accepted that proposition and, even more significantly, some 60% of the female population had come to believe that women with the desire and ability should be allowed to enter fields previously reserved for men.

Some industry have begun paying attention to the potential of female workers. For instance, in the field of sales and service, a growing number of women in their 30's and 40's now hold influential positions. Some of the most prestigious Japanese government agencies now include a few women when they hire recent university graduates earmarked for the upper reaches of bureaucracy. Employers seem to begin to realize that women can do jobs as well as men can once they are given training, motivation and opportunity.

During the discussion with other students at the interview with the man from the *Los Angeles Times*, I heard a variety of opinions about gender roles instead of typical answers.

Three out of five women students desired professional jobs as their life-long career. One out of three men showed his interest and sympathy for the feminist movement.

These changes favorable to women are able to alter the traditional conception of gender role, leading our male-oriented society toward a more egalitarian one. The progress would be slower, more subtle, and less controversial than the American model.

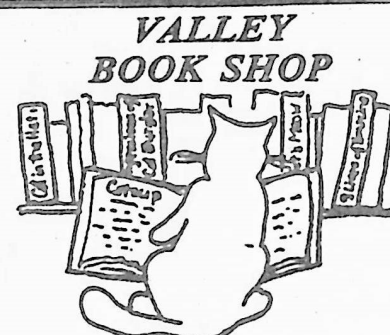
I hope that our women will keep forward, learning good points of western feminism, such as individualism, and reforming it to our culture. We will maintain some of our traditional values such as consideration of others and reservedness. This mixture of western ideas and oriental tradition would create a harmonious society for women, men and children. □



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# WORKING FOR EQUALITY

by Susanna Greenberg

## Racism = Classism

Dr. Joan Lester defines racism as the "one-way mistreatment of one group of people by another, based on race or perceived racial difference with social power behind it." For over twenty years, Lester has committed herself to changing attitudes about race, sex, class and sexual preference. Involved in the Civil Rights Movement, the Women's Movement, and dealing with issues of multi-cultural education, she is no stranger to the struggle for social change. As an independent parent and member of a multi-racial family, Lester's familiarity with discrimination is more than professional.

Over the past few years, Dr. Lester's workshops and seminars on "Unlearning Racism" have stimulated an awareness of the ramifications of racism, classism, sexism, and hetero-sexism and have helped participants deal with the consequent problems.

The demand for education and counseling on issues dealing with race, sex, and class is ever increasing. "People are feeling oppressed or confused about how to deal with these issues," Dr. Lester observes, "and they don't have any other group to turn to in which they can deal with feelings as well as with social and political considerations."

Through her non-profit agency, EQUITY INSTITUTE, she offers workshops to community groups, municipalities, and businesses, in addition to individual counseling and services.

The workshops are multifaceted: they inform about the history, economics, and politics of racism; they evoke group discussions of personal experiences with oppressive "isms"; they serve to support individuals who have come into contact with, or are survivors of these oppressions. Strategies for "interrupting" racism on an individual level are practiced through group role-playing.

Carole Johnson, a partner at Equity Institute, has a law degree and has worked on race and sex equity in Federal desegregation programs. She provides legal advice about sexual harassment and racial discrimination. Because people often do not realize that this abuse is illegal, she informs them of their rights under the law.

"Racism is very much tied into class oppression; it is a system that keeps people at each other's throats," says Dr. Lester. To illustrate this inextricable relationship between racism and economics, she tells of a situation described to her by a woman working in a Pioneer Valley factory. In this non-union shop, the white workers earn a few cents more than Hispanic workers. Because of this minimal wage differentiation, the possibility of successful unionizing is made more difficult. "It's not hard to be bought off," Lester acknowledges, "and they're being bought off for so little!"

According to Dr. Lester, this example shows one of the ways in which racism hurts all people, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged. "The targeting of specific differences often accomplishes the end of splitting people up. It becomes a justification for unequal distribution of resources." She feels that capitalism is an economic model of antagonism, nourished by the dynamic of people being pitted against one another. Given the structure of this country, there isn't room for everyone to be rich. "There's nothing wrong with economic security...only not at the expense of one another."

The formation of "ally relationships" between different groups is a key focus in Dr. Lester's workshops. She believes people become more powerful by aligning with each other and learning how others are adversely affected by sex-role stereotypes, low income, and racial discrimination. In order for this alignment to take place, members of non-targeted groups work together with those who are targeted. Using race relations as an example, whites are asked to take responsibility for how they are affected by racism. Through a sharing personal experiences, the disruption of intra-family and community relationships by racism becomes increasingly apparent.

In this safe and supportive environment, members of an oppressed group

talk about their experiences. Most important in this communication is that members of non-targeted groups come to realize that they can be allies of oppressed peoples and members of targeted groups see this evolution taking place.

## A Lesson from the Vietnamese

Dr. Lester's observations of personal reactions of the Vietnamese people during and after the Vietnam war made a great impact on her. She describes how their attitude serves as a model and inspiration. In their frequent meetings with U.S. citizens, they repeatedly stated that they did not blame the individual American soldiers for the war. This separation of feelings from institutional policies helps Lester work with all different groups, seeing racism as an institution, not as an individual or even group sentiment. "This institution [racism] serves to atomize people who mistakenly believe it is in their best interest to support and perpetuate the myths of racism," she says. Such misinformation fosters racist ideas. Dr. Lester believes individuals are responsible for their behavior in the present moment, but not for misinformation they have received from the media or from the ethno-cultural group in which they were raised.

"We all receive cultural stereotypes about other groups as well as about ourselves," she says. "Being a member of an American minority group doesn't put a paper bag over your head. Hispanic youth, Black youth, they see the same TV shows as White youth." Dr. Lester thinks it is important to exorcise these stereotypes from ourselves, and to have compassion for ourselves as well as others. She recognizes the pervasiveness of these problems. "We're all conditioned to think of white supremacy, male supremacy, upper-class supremacy. The culture is so strongly racist, people feel powerless to change it. But we can."

Dr. Lester's work helps people overcome their own racism, sexism, hetero-

sexism, and classism, and it empowers them to change society. To blame or harangue does not work. She validates individuals when they do something right rather than criticizing them for doing something wrong. She trusts people to want not to be racist or culturally supremacist, so she works with any group.

This working assumption grows from Dr. Lester's respect for the people in her workshops regardless of sex, class, or race. Neither withholding nor imposing her own ideas, she provides a safe atmosphere for airing many points of view. "No one answer can be 'right.'"

The strength and beauty of Dr. Lester's work is in her optimistic, non-judgmental attitude and her ability to see the commonalities between people of all races and classes. She maintains that while people who are directly oppressed suffer most brutally, others are damaged by oppression as well. "Segregation doesn't give free choice to Blacks or Whites. We are all tracked, although it may be preferential tracking," she says. "I have a very optimistic belief about human nature: that it is quite changeable, and that I can decide I'm going to be anti-racist." She is convinced that the obliteration of racism is crucial in fostering positive change in society.

[If you want to learn more about Joan Lester's work, call the Equity Institute (413) 256-6902.]

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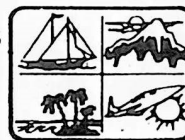
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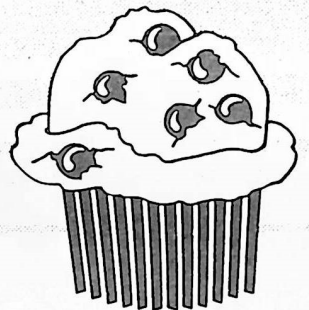
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# Dancing Toward Renewal

by Meg Downs

Ingrid Askew is a theater student at UMass with a concentration in directing. She is on the board of directors of Women's Community Theater and a member of The New World Ensemble; part of the Third World Theater Series at UMass. Ingrid began doing community theater 17 years ago when her mother wrote a play about the black experience. Herself a mother of two, ages 3 and 14, she also does theatre with children.

Patti O'Neal is a dance/theater choreographer, performer, and teacher concerned with the African-American experience in this country. She has been in Amherst since 1977. She studied at UMass for three years with Diana Ramos, and plans to finish at Hampshire College. To Patti, dance is "my purpose in life". Her work has dealt with forced sterilization, slavery, and political prisoners, all in movement form. Patti is a mother of a 15 year old daughter.

Ingrid and Patti are working together on a piece about the older Black woman entitled "Hands in the Mirror" to be presented by Women's Community Theater in March. They collaborated on a previous work entitled "Rythym Changes". One scene they described from "Rythym Changes" portrayed the tragedy of a black man chained to a television set while life passes him by. Ingrid and Patti shared some thoughts about their art form with the VWV.

--On "Hands in the Mirror"--

INGRID: The play deals with ageism. I think it's very beautiful and I think it's time we show some respect and love for the older American. Doing "Hands in the Mirror" has a real special feeling for me. It's very close to my heart...because of older friends that I have and my mother and my aunt. Just reading the script I feel their experience. We take a lot for granted with our loved ones; the things they've done for us and their pain. The set calls for large photographs I had photographs taken of my mother and some of my special friends here.

PATTI: It's a challenge for me because it is narrative. It's difficult to be able to create movement that is not going to be cliché but will be applicable. The fact that it's homage to older women makes it so beautiful.

--On Racism--

PATTI: Well, I feel you can't get out from underneath it, you can't get away from it; I don't care where you're located. I think it's racist here like it is anywhere else. It is the Caucasian male who defines everybody else's role in this society; who owns the dance world and defines for everybody else what is aesthetic. Black dance people in the U.S. need to redefine who we are. We don't have to fall into what the general definition has been.

INGRID: In all of the 5 colleges in this area there is no outlet for the Black or Third World theater major. If a Black theater major wanted to work on a project for a particular theater class, they'd have to go outside of the college community or do something with the Third World Series. If they want to audition for roles that the different colleges are doing, they usually have to play the part of a maid or butler because there are just no roles for a Third World student.

PATTI: Whites have stolen a lot of things from the music and theater of Black people. I really resent it. And I don't think there's anything wrong with being angry about it.

INGRID: It's time we take off the mask and show them the real thing. We can't always shuffle across the stage and act like we're happy--because we're not happy.

--On the State of the Arts--

PATTI: The arts are for the people and I don't think economics should keep people from participating. The arts make you a more healthy and holistic kind of person. The way it is now, it is an elitist type of thing, and something has got to be done about it.

I'm not here to entertain anybody. I feel that the arts can be used to enlighten people.

I think there are fads. Tradition is what is happening at this point. I think modern dance is being pushed aside because it's not having to do with roots. I'm African but I've lived in this country many, many years. Even Africans in Africa cannot say they've been

through what we have been through in this country. I don't think you can use something like traditional dance to address something like forced sterilization.

Artists should be more responsible for the content of the work they put out. The community should say that they recognize the importance and come out to performances. I think if the community was more responsible we wouldn't have to worry about these big corporations giving us money.

--On Black Education--

PATTI: I would like to work collectively with dancers, theater people and musicians who were interested in doing political work...to explore working with black classical--I don't like the word "jazz"--musicians. I like the combination of the music and the dance. I may also teach a class for disturbed youths.

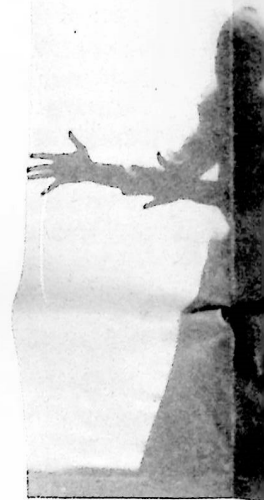
INGRID: I would like to do that, too, Patti...Can I be in your group? Also, part of my politics would be to use my art as a vehicle for teaching children their rich culture. I want black children, children of color to know their roots, their heritage.



photo by Sudan



photo by Kathy Kirk  
Ingrid Askew, director, and Patti O'Neal, choreographer  
of "Hands in the Mirror".



Runagate Runagate



photo by Ed Cohen



# Gathering Art for New Vision

by Ila O'Brien

Above the Cooperative Bank in Amherst Center, next to Lodestones and up a flight of stairs to the right is the Creswell Gallery. I visited the gallery the morning of Friday 13th (January) to interview the owner, Carol Creswell. I was immediately fascinated by the sheer variety of images and media the gallery offered. There were oil paintings on the walls, handcrafted dolls, and tables of jewelry—necklaces, bracelets, earrings of tiger's eye, coral and jade. There were art books and children's books, print displays, cards, baskets, cloth and bags, and sculptures of wood and clay. Combined, these forms create a richly woven mixture of the beauty, grace, dignity and depth which is Afro-American art.

Carol Creswell, owner of the gallery, was born in Nashville, TN, and attended Fisk University to study psychology and education. Then, coming to the University of Massachusetts, she earned a doctorate in education. She has two daughters.

In August, 1982, she decided to open the gallery. She thought it was something interesting and vital to do. "It met a political need of mine, too," she said. "When I came to Amherst 10 years ago, I became more aware of my Blackness."

Ila: Because this is a homogeneous community?

Carol: I think it is. Black people don't have a lot of places for their own things. I mean, I can't go into a shop and find the things I have here. I came by that

once when I had an argument with a women over a doll in Zayres! There was this one little Black doll, and I didn't have much money. I said to myself, "I'll come back when I have enough money." When I returned, the doll was gone, and I said to the clerk, "Where's the Black doll? And she said, "Well, we only get one of those." I jumped all over the poor clerk, and it wasn't her fault. The doll was simply sold. But to me it was one of those attitudes you pick up on in a town. Often, I couldn't find things for my children that gave them a positive image of themselves. That was one of my concerns when I was at the University: To show people the positiveness of other cultures, not just their own.

"As far as the gallery is concerned, I want people to be able to come and request or come and see the work of Black and Third World artists, because that's where I've decided to be. Some people say to me, "Why have you limited your work? Why don't you have a Picasso or a this or a that?" It's not limited, I've specialized! I'm meeting my needs as well as showing the world what's available.

Ila: How did the gallery evolve?

Carol: What I started with were the prints and hopes of showing original works of Black artists. Then I added cards. A friend brought me back some dolls and pottery from a Third World country. Then another friend gave me some dolls she had made to sell on consignment. Another friend lives on the little island of St. Lucia, where people don't have a lot. She sent me a basket with spice and some little dolls.

Continued on next page...

PATTI: Black people should know more of their history and they don't...if you don't know where you came from, you can't possibly know where you've been.

We were the people who built pyramids, made a calendar, dealt with surgery, brain surgery...what kind of truth do we get in our educational system? I heard about George Washington Carver and Booker T. Washington. They didn't tell me anything else—that's deliberate!

INGRID: Just learning about Africa in geography and history as a kid in school—Africans wore grass skirts and lived in huts. Teachers didn't talk about the beautiful buildings in Timbuktu and they didn't talk about the elliptical towers in Zimbabwe. I never knew any of that until I was out of high school and started reading on my own and meeting people who had been there. And a lot of our kids still don't know unless they have exceptional teachers.

PATTI: And you try to tell your children the truth; but don't you forget you've got the whole rest of the world out there telling them the other "truth". I had my daughter enrolled in a Black Nationalist school that was here at UMass...and she was aware of things...she went to strikes...she went to Cuba for six weeks...no way would she be able to get that in a public school. I saw that it could work.



photo by Buck Stewart

ate, from "Spirits Moving" by Patti O'Neal.



photo by Ed Cohen

Patti dances the American Black experience





## Gathering Art (cont.)

There were several things from the island she thought would sell in the gallery and give the women of St. Lucia, who don't have a lot of work, a place to market their wares. Interestingly, the St. Lucia dolls got into a national magazine and I've been able to wholesale them. I also have the work of Bev and Jim Jemison. They're both potters. She designs little clay animals. He does larger pottery. They both sell out of the Leverett Crafts Center.

"Another friend, Tony Vacca, went out of business and I bought his artifacts. (Carol points to the case by the windows filled with jewelry, baskets, cloth, and with intricately crafted wooden African sculptures on top.) The batiks I got from a friend who'd been to Upper Volta. There is a vender from Nigeria who sells on the street in Harlem. I buy cloth and straw bags from him. There are several places in New York that carry the African beads, baskets, and cloth. Some of the jewelry I make myself, some I purchase, some has been made for the gallery by a student at Hampshire College. So it has been an evolution that brought me to the variety you see today.

Ila: You have an advanced degree in education; why aren't you working in that field?

I am categorically overqualified, underpaid, underutilized, Black, and an older woman. The job market is full when people arrive in Amherst. If you want to feed into the job market after graduate school, you usually won't find work in your field. I have spoken to many other people who have come to Amherst, become intrigued, and want to stay, but then find themselves in the same position.



Ila: Did you ever consider becoming an artist yourself?

Carol: No. My mother worked in a college gallery. To my mother aesthetics were always important. We always had the work of other Black artists around. I grew up in the context of the segregated South on a college campus. I think this gallery comes from my meeting and being fascinated by people like Elizabeth Catlett and Alma Thomas and others with a strong commitment to the image of Black people and from listening to my mother talk about Black artists and Black art.

Ila: Tell me about Elizabeth Catlett.

Carol: She is a woman with a strong political commitment to working with the image of Black people. She had trouble in this country, as a lot of Black artists and expatriates do, so for a number of years she lived in Mexico, where she could find more outlets. She feels the Mexican image and the Black image are enough alike that they overlap. She has a wonderful piece I like called "Raboza". It's a woman in a shawl. The image is sometimes Mexican and sometimes Black. She travels back and forth to Mexico now. She was one of the people who impressed me a great deal.

Ila: And your mother?

Carol: My mother used to feel that you have to support the community. And you have to "do things for the Race." That's an old Black expression. She used to buy things from Black artists who were starting out. It was her way of correlating art to life.

Ila: The book you have there entitled *Maasi* is certainly colorful. I would like to know more about it.

Carol: As I added African artifacts, I wanted to know more about the pieces and where they came from. This is a beautiful book with beautiful illustrations. It describes the Maasi tribe of Africa; it talks about the land and the people. It's not just an art book. This is a children's book illustrated by Tom Feelings. I think his work is wonderful. His images are so sensitive and expressive.

Ila: How would you define the gallery?

Carol: I call it *Creswell Gallery* because for me the artwork is the important part. It has really evolved into a grandiose gift shop, but I still want the option to show original work.

Art doesn't come in one form only. Art is not just a painting. Art is a doll that is handcrafted; art is stained glass done in a beautiful way. Art is what you perceive as beautiful. It can be cloth, if you want to start with the basics.

Ila: Do you have a particular commitment to women artists?

Carol: I'm soon to give a talk at Yale around the topic of Black women artists for Black History Month. Women artists across the board have a hard time because we don't have a "wife" to take care of us. It's hard to make a living as an artist anyhow. Women have had to use subterfuge in order to be successful, going by men's names, for example, so people wouldn't be able to tell that certain pieces of art were created by women. Yes, I have a commitment to women artists. I want to help present women artists to the world.

The interview time is up; as I linger around the gallery looking at prints and jewelry, the phone rings. Carol answers. "How are you? I am just well! Oh! Wonderful. O.K. I love doing this. It's really a challenge to match up the colors, to match up the frames, so bring it over her! I'd be happy to do that. This

correction for above line:

it over here! I'd be happy to do that. This weekend is kind of tight. What day would be convenient? Tuesday? Oh, yes, yes, yes. How about six o'clock?"

In late February, Carol Creswell expects to move the *Creswell Gallery* from its present location to 179 North Pleasant St. Gallery hours are Mon-Fri, 11-5:30; Sunday and other times by appointment. Phone: 246-8000. □

**Failing to support your feminist newspaper is politically incorrect.**

# Announcements ...

We are unable to bring you an announcement page this month. We regret this. Mechanical failures and human frailties during production prevented us from getting the material typeset in time. We owe it to our advertisers, who are almost our sole means of support, to keep to a first of the month schedule. The "overnight" staff feels that it is critical to bring out the paper on time, even in the state you find it this month.

The VWV has its own announcement to make, as we race to meet the printing deadline an hour from now:

**ONLY YOU CAN SAVE THE VWV. Don't believe our subscription form—we didn't have time to change our printed subscription form. Our rates are now increased to \$18 for two subscriptions, one subscription \$8-20, sliding scale.**

**Think about it. Do you want to read the Collegian as your only source of local women's news? We need 2000 subscriptions (see letters) to feel valued enough to continue. To continue this way would be to participate longer in a group that is by necessity exploitive.**



# Passing As White

by Jonquil Morgan Twinspirits

If you would like to pass as white (assuming that your skin is not really dark and passing is possible for you at all), the first thing you should do is get rid of any telltale name(s) you may have, such as "Rhonda Bearfoot", "Juanita Perez", "Clara Washington Carver", or "Jonquil Twinspirits". A lot of women with clear, light complexion and even blue eyes pass unnoticed until they get asked their name. Then, they say the word that tells all, like "Moreno", and they've blown it. Totally.

So pick a really white name, like Rebekah—no, *not* Rebekah—sounds Jewish—Joan, that's good ... "Joan Parker", or maybe "Judy Garland", or just "Gidget".

Practice answering to the new name, and practice calling yourself by it, maybe in a mirror. Learn not to use telltale gestures or ethnic phrases.

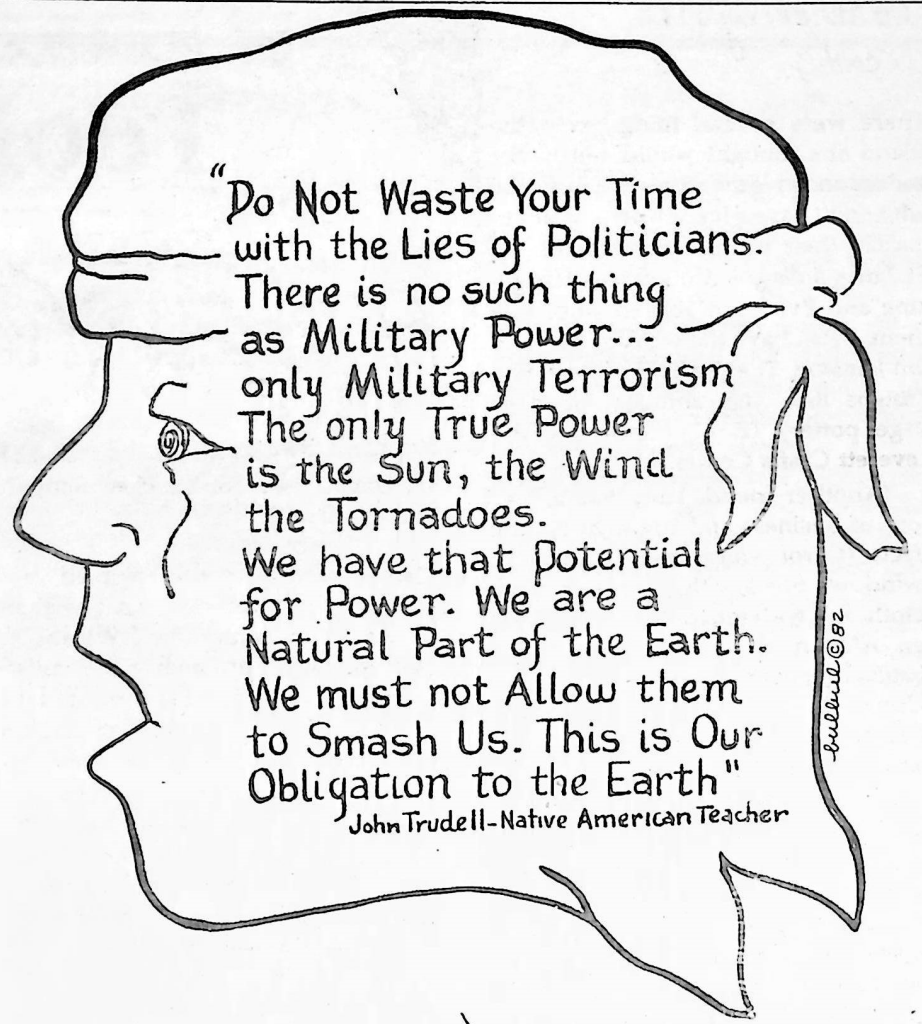
NEVER BRING ANYBODY HOME! What if an old friend who knows your father is a Native American drops in? What if your mother comes to the door, and she's wearing a star of David? It's just not safe. Assemble a group of reasons why you cannot take people to your house, like "It's being painted", or "the exterminator's there right now", or "It burned down this morning". Remember to alternate your excuses.

Once you have learned to follow these few rules, you will find you no longer need to fear discovery. You can rest assured that your new friends will probably never find out that you are not pure, lily white.

There are a couple of problems with this whole instruction plan. First of all, this is 1984, and it's not supposed to matter what color your skin is or which people you're descended from. I mean, if we can be proud to be gay, can't we be proud to be Jewish, or Black, or Hispanic? I mean, there's only one race...right? The Human race...right?

Why the hell did I waste my time writing this article? Hey, I'm gay and my father is a Native American, a member of the Sioux Nation, and I'm proud of it! If anybody reading this thinks any less of me for a reason like that, should I care?

Of course not! Forget what I said in the first five paragraphs. Be proud of our ancestry, wear your color as an individual, and remember that WHO you are is the important thing. WHAT you are simply does not exist in the eyes of anybody who matter. Be happy ... PEACE.



"Do Not Waste Your Time with the Lies of Politicians. There is no such thing as Military Power... only Military Terrorism. The only True Power is the Sun, the Wind the Tornadoes. We have that potential for Power. We are a Natural Part of the Earth. We must not Allow them to Smash Us. This is Our Obligation to the Earth"

John Trudell-Native American Teacher



# VWV spells "Ad Power"

by Joan Wilce

The effectiveness of VWV advertising has been confirmed repeatedly, but never quite so dramatically as last month. The paper had been on the street only a few days. At 2 pm. on Feb. 2, the Everywoman's Center left us the following note:

Women of VALLEY WOMEN'S VOICE:

We received a call from a Telephone Co. representative named Bob B. It seems the

number printed for a Valley Women's Voice ad is a mistake. It is an unlisted number, connected with a computer terminal that controls heat. A number of people have called, disrupting the computer's functioning, and there have been numerous complaints to the Phone Co. They want something done immediately. (?) Contact Phone Co.

A number of calls to the Phone Co. failed to reach company representative Bob B., (who, believe-it-or-not, failed to leave us his phone number). We did

locate the offending ad—Dandy Lion Trucking.

Now that wasn't even supposed to be an ad. It was reprinted from the first issue of the VWV as part of our 5th anniversary page. We had checked on Dandy Lion's whereabouts without finding them. In a spirit of fun and sympathy, we ran their ad with the question: Whatever happened to Dandy Lion Trucking? It was around 3 in the morning before we went to press, and we didn't have wits enough to take out the phone number.

We still don't know about the trucking company, but the fate of their old phone number has been uncovered by all those callers who wanted to hire a trucker!

We are sorry for the trouble caused by our failure to make clear that the ad was not real and by our leaving in the number.

The comic side of this can not be overlooked. A Murphy's Law Ripple Effect! Makes a person ask: What else might computers be doing with old telephone numbers? How many other missing Telephone Co. representatives are there? Why don't you start a new trucking company to fill the vacancy—and put your ad in the VWV?

Is it possible that there are more sinister applications of Murphy's Law and computers?

\*\*\*\*\*

Please support our advertisers tell them you saw it in the Valley Women's Voice

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VALLEY BICYCLES

**SPECTACULAR SECOND ANNIVERSARY SALE!**

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# Tooling Up

by Anne Perkins

My mother had the good fortune to give birth to four daughters, but when our father died in 1948, she had yet to understand our potential. He had once been a carpenter, and since she had only girls (and needed money), she sold his tools.

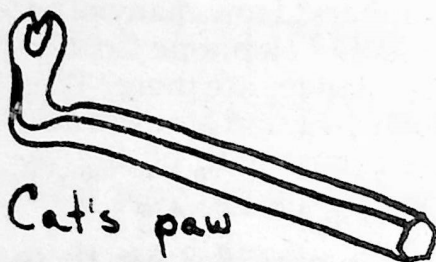
I was only five years old, but I can still picture those tools all laid out on tables in the garage—beautiful old planes, a vice, hammers, pliers—I was fascinated with them. I guess that was the beginning of my love affair with carpentry tools, though it took me another twenty-three years to begin acquiring my own.

The tool world is such a male world that I can still be intimidated in a hardware store. To avoid this, I've even bought tools through mail order—and found that is *not* a good way for me to buy tools. I've found I can only evaluate the quality of a tool by holding it in my hand, testing its heft and balance. And I've also learned the hard way that a poor quality tool is nothing but a frustration.

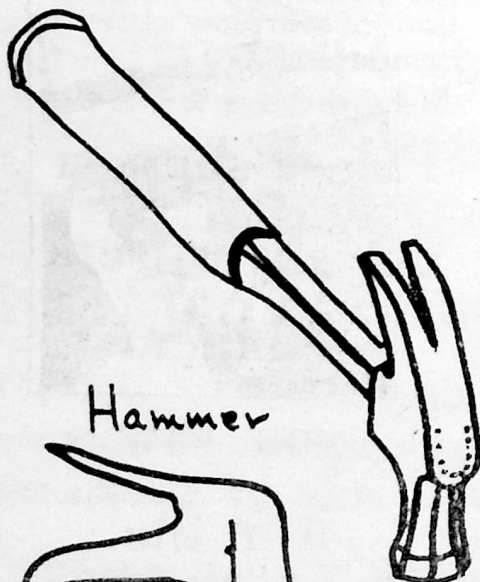
The tools I carry in my belt every day are a hammer, a 25 ft. tape measure, two carpenter's pencils, a utility knife, a combination square, and a calculator. Not far away are a chalk line, four foot level, catspaw, and safety glasses. Add some saws, a staple gun, a drill, and you've got a basic starter kit for any aspiring builder.

I am describing here the tools I use most in the hope of giving some of you more confidence when tool shopping. Bear in mind that these are mainly tools for building buildings, not for finish work or furniture:

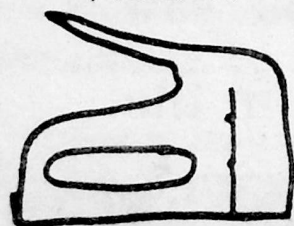
—I just bought my five pocket leather tool belt this summer. I should have done so years ago. This should be a first item, as it carries the weight of the tools and nails on both hips and keeps all those tools handy. Don't overload it at first, though; give your body a chance to build up to carrying the weight of a full apron.



Cat's paw



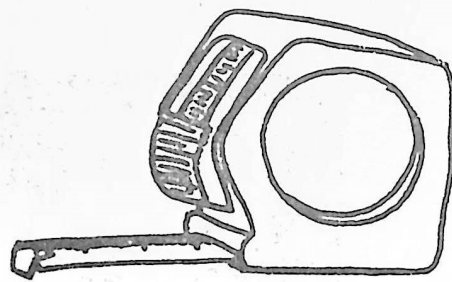
Hammer



Stapler

—My hammer is a well balanced 20 oz. Estwing. I started carpentry using a 16 oz. hammer which now feels like a toy in my hand. But when you move to a 20 oz. hammer, balance is important. So stand in the hardware store and swing hammers until you find the one that feels right to your hand. Some carpenters prefer a wooden handled hammer, with the idea that wood absorbs some of the shock of hitting nails. But I've found the steel shanked Estwing to have better balance than wooden ones. I use a curved claw; most pros use a straight claw. The curved is better for pulling nails and is less lethal on the backswing. The straight is better for ripping boards apart.

—My 25 ft. tape has a 3/4 in. wide blade that can be locked in position. A wider blade is too bulky, a narrower one bends too much. Get a good quality tape which is long enough to be useful for what you are building. You can't get accurate measurements leaping frogging short tapes. I also often use a 100 ft. tape, but the 25 ft. is the everyday tape.



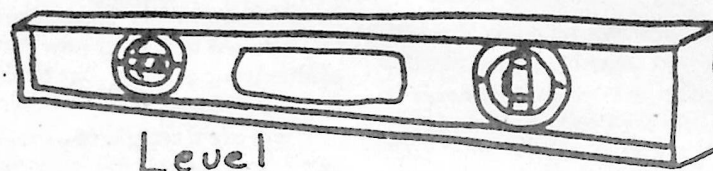
Measuring Tape

—My Stanley utility knife is my favorite tool. You push a button to pull out an old blade and insert a new one; you push another button to release your stock of new blades. I hate those utility knives that have you get out a screw driver to change the blade. That takes five to ten minutes—and when you're doing roofing or insulating, you need to change the blade *every five to ten minutes!* It's hard to find these gems, but I found one at Rocky's this Fall. Get heavy duty blades to go with it.

—Pencils made to write on paper tend to break on wood. Carpenter's pencils have a rectangular lead—easily sharpened with a utility knife. The soft lead ones are good for marking on wet or icy wood; the harder ones don't have to be sharpened every other minute.

—A combination square measures both 90 and 45 degree angles. Its primary use is to mark boards for cutting or layout. Mine is a honey—bought ten years ago at a flea market. It has that heft I mentioned earlier. The new ones are all flimsy by comparison, but get the best quality you can find. This tool gets lots of abuse.

—For the four foot level, you can go middle of the road. Don't get the cheapest; it will bend and give you double bubbles! But you don't *have* to have a beautiful polished wooden one with brass edges. (I don't.)



Level

—My 13 amp 7 1/4 in. Makita circular saw is a good choice for a serious builder; it is good quality and lighter weight than most contractor's saws. (my back can kill me after a day of lifting up and putting down my saw a million times, so here I want *less* heft.) I recommend a 10 amp saw for a beginner, as the power of a 13 amp can be scary and hard to control at first. I use a carbide tipped combination blade for rough framing, because it stays sharp many times longer than a regular blade. For fine work I use a plywood blade. It has the greatest number of teeth of any blade and thus makes the smoothest cuts.

—In 1976 I built my cabin, beyond the power lines, with handsaws—an 8 point Disston Crosscut and a 5 1/2 point Ranger rip. Many many sharpenings later these two saws are still going strong. Good hand saws can be found at flea markets. Get ones that will last a lifetime.

—Those of us who don't normally wear glasses need to wear safety glasses when using power tools. It's easier to make accurate cuts when you're not squinting at your line. I use rigid plastic adjustable glasses—and keep them in a wool sock so they won't get scratched. I've found flexible plastic goggles to be a nuisance; they steam up too quickly.

—A 50 ft. heavy duty extension cord is needed for most jobs. Get heavy duty to protect your power tools. I find 100 ft. cords get tangled too often, better to have two fifties. A junction box can be very handy when using more than one power tool or when lights are needed.

—I still haven't found the perfect staple gun. The heavy duty Arrow T-50's are difficult to squeeze; the lighter weight ones break. But all hardware stores carry Arrow T-50 staples and if you get another brand of stapler you're doomed to running all over town to find the right brand of staples. Arrow does make a wonderful hammer stapler that is worth the hefty price. Sometime you need a gun, though, not a hammer.

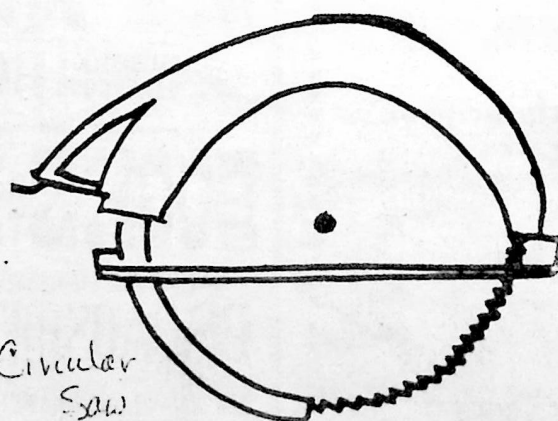
—I'll finish this list, which could go on and on, with a note on sawhorses. They need to be sturdy enough to stand on and light enough to be portable; a difficult combination. The common brackets sold in hardware stores do not make a sturdy horse. Brookstore, a mail order house in Petersborough, N.H., sells a pretty good pair of plastic brackets. Or make a pair with 2x4's, plywood gaskets, and screws.

The best bargains for hand tools are at tag sales and flea markets. I would not recommend buying a used electric tool, however. Most lumber yards sell good quality tools because they deal with so many professionals. Their prices are generally fair but not cheap. Hardware stores vary, but your old time down town hardware store, at least in rural communities, usually has good quality tools—and sometimes a woman clerk to help you. Discount stores have some good tools and some awful tools; be careful. Two stores in Worcester are renowned for their tool bargains: Spaggs and The Worcester Tool Factory Outlet.

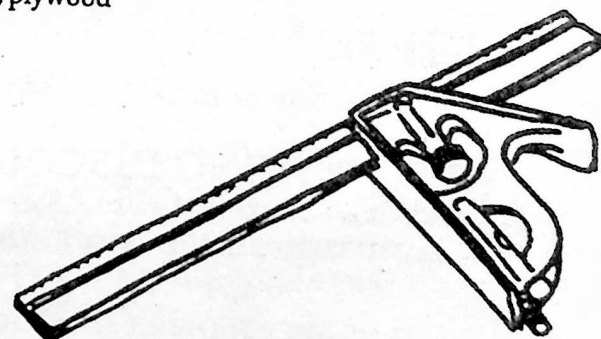
Buy what you need when you need it and not before. Voice of experience here. I have some great little tools I bought five years ago, knowing they'd come in handy some day...and working full time as a carpenter I've yet to use them. So, think about what tools you'll need for a particular job and then get the ones you need. For example, when the time comes to do your first sheet-rocking job, go out and buy sheet-rocking knives. Or better yet, borrow them. If you don't end up hating sheet-rocking after that first time, buy *yourself some nice knives and go into business!*

To determine hand tool quality, go by the feel of the tool. Does it have some weight to it? Does it flex or bend where it shouldn't? Will it be destroyed the first time it gets dropped or stepped on? How is its balance in *your* hand? With power tools the same sense of the tool is relevant, though more difficult to determine. Learning brand names is another way. Stanley makes good hand tools, though some of are different quality. I believe they make three grades of four foot levels, for instance. Disston makes different grades of hand saws. Black and Decker, Craftsman(Sears), and Skil make good power tools of varying grades. Makita and Milwaukee make good professional grade tools. This isn't meant as a definitive list, just some of the most common brand names.

Having the right tool for a job makes the difference between joy and frustration. Good luck finding the right tools for yourself. □



Circular Saw



Combination Square



# Jackson's M.T.V.: Any Redeeming Social Value?

by Amy Hasbrouck

On Christmas day, I saw Michael Jackson's *Thriller* on M-TV for the first time. I had heard many stories about it. I'd heard that Jackson spent a million dollars on it, that the dancing was fantastic, that it really wasn't "offensive" (to women), and that it was very "offensive." Taking into account the judgement of the people who'd made the various claims about the video's "offensiveness," I was excited. I watched with a critical eye.

\*\*\*

The beginning depicts Michael Jackson and a young woman (both black) dressed in fifties' garb, driving on a dark country road in a 1950s era car. When the car runs out of gas, Jackson and his date are forced to walk through darkened woods. They stop in a clearing and Jackson declares his love for the woman, and asks her to be "his girl." She is flattered, accepts, and wears the ring he offers her. Then he says he must tell her something about himself that she will not like. At that moment, the full moon moves out from behind a cloud, and he looks at it, afraid. She asks what is wrong, and the next shot is of Jackson turning into a werewolf. She starts to scream, and in the early stages of his change, he tells her to go away. She stays put and continues to scream for two or three minutes. Finally she runs, and her werewolf/boyfriend pursues her.

He eventually ambushes her, tackles her, and is about to maul her to pieces when the scene switches to a movie house, where Jackson and the same woman are seated, dressed in contemporary clothing, watching the scene, which we can no longer see. He is smiling broadly, eating popcorn, obviously enjoying himself. She is upset and disgusted, and decides she wants to leave. Jackson is clearly unhappy, but goes with her to walk her home.

On their way, he begins to sing and dance around her, while she continues to walk, watching him and smiling. The scene changes momentarily to a graveyard, where the corpses rise from the graves in various stages of decomposition, and stumble off down the road. Soon the group of zombies comes upon the protagonists, and surrounds them. Jackson and the woman are frightened, and stand back-to-back to confront the closing circle of ghouls. Suddenly, Jackson turns on the woman, (his eyes become like those of the werewolf) and joins the monsters in what could be called "the production number" of the video—a four minute song-and-dance routine with Jackson and the zombies. The woman is phased out of the picture, but is later shown standing nearby, watching the events. The song ends, and the plot gets back to the business at hand.

Jackson and the ghouls chase the woman (wearing spike-heeled shoes) who runs into an old abandoned shack. They break in, and soon Jackson has her pinned on an old mattress. He is about to rip her to shreds. She screams...

...and is awakened by Jackson's hand on her shoulder. Yes, it was all a dream after all! He helps her off the couch in the brightly-lit living room, and offers to take her home. He puts his left arm around her shoulders, steering her away from the camera, then turns directly to the camera and smiles. His eyes are again those of the werewolf...

Though this is not the most misogynous video being shown these days on M-TV, (Musical Television, a cable station which shows video-taped music 24 hours a day) it's probably the most dangerous. It is subtle in its attack on women, and it perpetuates the "woman as victim" myth and reality.

There are videos and advertisements on M-TV—such as an ad for Chams menswear, and videos by Herbie Hancock and the group Devo—which are far more explicit in their images of violence toward, and objectification of, women. However, *Thriller's* message of woman as victim, man as (gratified) abuser is, in my opinion, far more harmful, by virtue of its relative subtlety. It's one thing to see semi-nude women dancing across the screen, or men demonstrating overt violence against women, but, after all, one never sees the woman killed in the *Thriller* video. Therefore parents will not consider *Thriller* unsuitable viewing for their children (most viewers of videos are teen-agers and pre-adolescents). Those seeing it will not think the goings on outlandish or unusual, and the message will be more easily accepted. Yet it can be inferred that the same woman is killed three times by the same man, who seems to enjoy seeing her die. There are no blood-and-guts scenes to make *Thriller* distasteful, and with excellent production, it seems to be going down very well with the kids who see it.

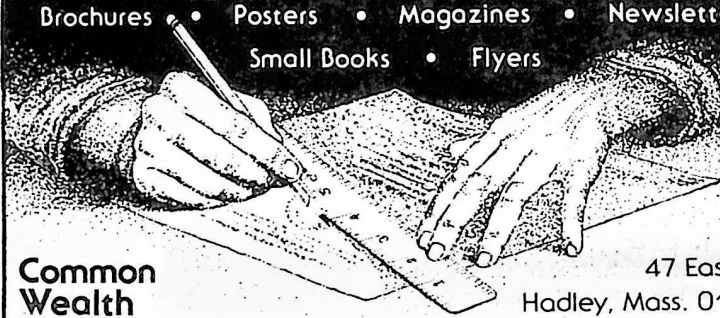
Michael Jackson's career began more than ten years ago, when he sang as the youngest member of a group of brothers called the Jackson Five. He has since grown up, gone out on his own, and has been very successful. Throughout his career, he has been the heart-throb of many teen-aged girls and young women. Surely, many of these fantasize about what it would be like to be Michael Jackson's lover, and through watching the *Thriller* video they find out! To be Michael Jackson's lover means to be hated by your lover, and to be killed by him. It's obvious that a part of a heart-throb/sex symbol's success is his desirability, and this quality is promoted for the sake of his (or her) career. The message is "you girls should love me, and this is what I'll do to you when you do. This is what you are."

In perpetuating the myth of woman as victim, the *Thriller* video continues the reality of women's victimization. The woman's role in the play is completely passive, and she is portrayed as being unable to take care of herself. She stands still in terror despite a direct warning to escape and later watches as

her werewolf boyfriend dances with a bunch of corpses. Circumstances also serve to victimize her. She is alone in the woods at night, she is alone on a deserted street, she is in high-heeled shoes, she is trapped and helpless in a dilapidated house, she is at the mercy of her murderous, monstrous boyfriend whose car and protection she needs. These images not only "keep women in their place" (reminding us exactly how vulnerable we "are" and "should stay") but also convey to the rest of the world that it's appropriate to take advantage of a woman's vulnerability: after all, if Michael Jackson does it, it must be great!

To say that the *Thriller* video bothered me would be an understatement. Unfortunately the frustration I feel at seeing the video leaves me with little creativity. All I can suggest is writing to Epic Records (a division of CBS records), which is the label Michael Jackson records under, or to M-TV, and tell them how you feel. Unified action ended the Rolling Stones' "Black and Blue" advertising campaign; we can succeed again.

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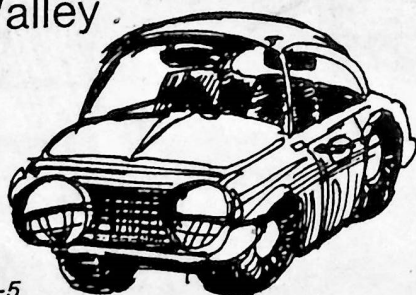
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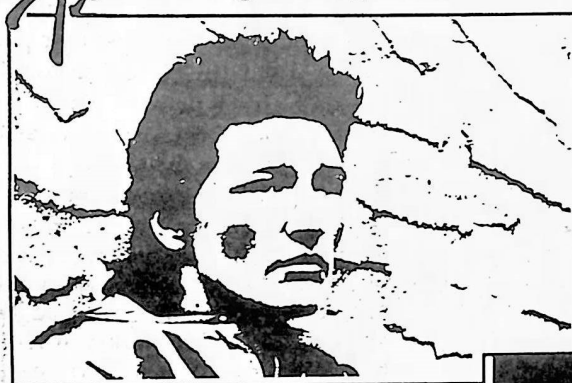
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## MORE LETTERS

Dear Friends,

We are writing to request your help in raising money to help the Women of Faith who acted at Electric Boat, Quonset Point, R.I., on October 3, 1983.

We estimate an approximate need of \$1000 to cover court costs, fines, printing, transportation, and the cost of appeals. If each of you who receives this letter were to contribute \$5.00 and ask five other friends to do so, we could raise the full amount.

Asking for money on our own behalf and on the behalf of the six other women who acted with us is one of the hardest parts of our witness. We know, though, that the eight of us were not alone on October 3, and that we are not alone now, so we are asking you to concretely share the burden of our action. As the witness continues throughout the court process and throughout prison, each of the eight of us needs to be able to make decisions not overburdened by financial considerations.

We will be sentenced on Friday, February 10 at the Washington County Superior Court, Kingston, R.I. A bus will leave from the Municipal parking lot in Northampton at 6:00am, (returning there at approximately 2:30 pm) for those who wish to be part of a support vigil. The cost is \$10.00 roundtrip; contact Victoria at 584-8975 for reservations.

Women of Faith sentenced on Friday will be able to receive mail at the following address: Adult Correctional Institution, Women's Division, P.O. Box 8312, Cranston, Rhode Island 02920.

Sincerely,  
Judith Schckel and  
Victoria Safford

Dear Editors,

Warmest greetings of this new year! I was pleased to see in a recent issue of your paper an editorial piece by a male. I feel this bodes well for the future... although as different genders, there are issues which divide us, there is far more which we share in common. Specifically, to genuinely combat many of the critical issues facing the nation and the globe, namely poverty and malnutrition, dehumanization and various forms of violence as expressed in the arms race, the tragedy in Central America and the Philippines, we must strive to transcend petty factionalism in the service of humanity. Perhaps too we will see a rebirth of opportunities for dialogue in which women and men can share experiences, feelings and hopes. Would not this type of forum do much to alleviate some of the animosities which breed in a climate of rejectivity and defensiveness—to which I fear we are all to blame?

Please consider this letter or the enclosed piece which I wrote for 'The Peacemaker,' P.O. Box 627, Garberville Calif. 95440. You might also request the February issue which ran a statement which many men in the peace movement have signed supportive of the women's liberation movement.

For increasing solidarity,  
R. Jay Allain.

Dear Lesbian/Woman who shared in Willow Winterfire's Healing/Dying,

This is a small but deeply heartfelt thank you for all the love, caring, money, and energy you have sent to Willow and me during this time of intense transition in both our lives.

Willow, with the help of all of us, was able to create a positive, loving, healing death—a matriarchal death—a death full of her own power—in this patriarchy. And this is no small feat. Her strength and our strengths can only spread throughout all our lives. Take it up and use it well.

I want you to know that this is a very special lesbian community. The way you have come together to support both of us and now me alone is not just found anywhere. One of the important reasons we moved back here from the west coast a little over a year ago is the knowledge that this kind of family and caring for each other does exist here. And we wanted and needed to share in it.

I am now in the painful and exciting process of letting go of the life Willow and I had made together and re-establishing myself on my own, in my own life.

So, thank you all for being here and be proud of yourselves.

Deliah Rosel

### OBITUARY Willow Winterfire

Willow Winterfire passed over peacefully the evening of January 16, 1984. In her home, wimmin encircled her, sang to her, and she was not afraid of death. Willow's lover, Deliah Rosel, and many loving friends mourn her passing and celebrate her healing work and courage.

Particularly during the last few months, expenses were high. Funeral costs alone were almost \$1000, and many other bills are yet unpaid. Contributions are needed, and very much appreciated. To help with Willow's expenses, make out a check to CASH and mail it to Lorraine Lipani, Box 105, Sunderland, MA 01375. Many of us have been given the gift and responsibility of being a member of Willow's family. Please remember her in this way and help if you can. Thank you.

Dear VWV,

You have been grand to keep publishing my monthly letter! I hope you will let me use a short announcement from time to time to help new women find us—women who are asking the same sort of questions that started me searching for women who don't fit neatly into either heterosexual or lesbian boxes.

Thanks to you, a number of "Valley Women" have found they are not alone that way. The VWV has served an important function, performed a valuable service. I doubt if any other paper in the area would or could have done it.

I wish you a long life. May you continue to be there for women who need and enjoy the many things you offer.

In gratitude,

Iso

Dear Friends:

How does a 7:00-9:30 p.m. meeting on Thursday, March 15 strike you? A correspondent wrote to suggest that time and to offer her home as the place. (Others have offered homes, but left a time open, and I guess it was too early for me to pursue a specific time. This time the offer comes at the right time.)

She says your children are welcome if you don't have a sitter—she has children, too. She suggests we bring a food item—"nothing fancy, just comfortable."

Please send your phone number and the best time for reaching you, so that we can get directions to you if you plan to join us. I have heard that mail comes faster now through Everywomen's Center than through the Northampton

P.O. box. If time is short by the time you read this, you can call and trust your number to the VWV. They will pass it along to me carefully. If you don't trust answering machines, call Everywoman's Center first to find out when a staff person for VWV will be around. Or if you want to hand deliver a note, simply address it to me, c/o VWV and take it to the Everywoman's Center. It will get to me safely.

If you can't come to this initial meeting, do not give up. I know there will be many more to look forward to. I am asking the VWV if they will run announcements for us now and then until we get communication more settled.

I look forward to getting acquainted with all of you soon.

Sincerely,

Iso

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